



Picture Perfect Pickup

The STS-79 astronauts received a presidential welcome after a successful fourth docking with the Russian Mir Space Station.

Commander Bill Readdy, Pilot Terry Wilcutt and Mission Specialists Jay Apt, Tom Akers and Carl Walz delivered Astronaut John Blaha to the station and brought home Astronaut Shannon Lucid after she had spent more than six months on the Russian outpost, completing the first Phase 1 crew exchange in low-Earth orbit.

Throughout the 10-day mission, the crew took photos to share. From top to bottom, left to right:

1) The entire STS-79 crew and the Mir-22 cosmonauts pose for the traditional in-flight crew photo during a gift exchange ceremony in Mir's base block. Front row from left are, Blaha, Apt, Walz, Akers, Lucid, Readdy and Mir 22 Commander Valery Korzun. Back row from left are, Wilcutt and Mir 22 Flight Engineer Alexander Kaleri.

2) Wilcutt travels from *Atlantis*' docking module to Mir toting a water bag that will be used to supplement the Mir drinking water supply.

3) Akers, working in Spacehab, goes over an inventory of supplies that will be transferred to Mir during the five days of docked operations.

4) Lucid and Kaleri prepare to move Lucid's cosmonaut suit from Mir to *Atlantis*, officially marking her departure from Mir and arrival as part of the *Atlantis* crew.

5) From left, Walz and Apt work on the Cartilage in Space experiment, a component of the Biotechnology System located in the Spacehab module. The cartilage experiment

investigated tissue formation and basic cell-to-cell interactions in a low-gravity, stationary-cell-culture environment, and was transferred to Mir for continued studies by Blaha.

6) Readdy looks over a checklist at the commander's station on *Atlantis*' flight deck. Among his many other duties as commander, Readdy controlled the orbiter during a series of maneuvers during docking and undocking operations.

7) Mir is backdropped over a storm in the "Roaring 40s" near Heard Island in the South Indian Ocean.

8) During off-duty time, Apt, a licensed amateur radio operator, talks to ground contacts via the Shuttle Amateur Radio Experiment. The radio was used for communications between *Atlantis* and Mir during docking and undocking activities.

9) Walz totes a bag carrying a space suit that was used by the cosmonauts.

10) Commanders Readdy and Korzun reunite soon after the *Atlantis*-Mir docking. Both commanders spent months in training together before their flights.

11) Wilcutt, on *Atlantis*' aft flight deck, takes photos of Earth for study by observations scientists at JSC. Several components of the docked Mir space station are in the background.

12) Korzun ventures into a node connecting multiple elements of the Mir complex.

13) Akers, in the Mir base block, transfers the Protein Crystal Growth experiment onto Mir. The experiment was set up in the Priroda module. □

